439 business of transporting the contraband silver pieces to Liang Shan. From the Lolo point of view, opium alone is enough to exchange for white silver, guns, and all the commodities of daily use.

To plant opium, the Lolo have to select a fertile field. 439 An increase in the production of opium causes a correspond- 464 ing decrease in agricultural products. The planting of opium reduces soil fertility and the land gradually becomes impover- [567] ished. Because of the scarcity of manpower, the Lolo kidnapped Han-Chinese from the border area as slaves to engage in large-scale production of opium. There is a fixed time for the planting of opium and its harvest. During this period, they import from the border region a large Han-Chinese labor force, which they send out of the Lolo territory after the job is done. Once I met an old man of about fifty at a teahouse in Ma-liu Wan. From the conversation, I learned that during March, 1943, the old man and over 80 other Han-Chinese laborers had entered the Lolo area with armed protection by black Lolo leaders to gather the opium crop at the northern part of the Ma-ching-tzu area. Their wages were paid according to the [465] amount of opium they harvested. For every eight ounces of opium, one ounce was paid as wages. Every day the old man harvested about 20 ounces of opium and earned a wage of two and a half ounces. After harvest the opium was exported for 439 sale in the Han-Chinese territory. At that time opium was sold in the Lolo region at the rate of one piece of silver, or about 1,000 dollars in Chinese national currency, for every three ounces of opium. When it was imported into Han-Chinese territory, one ounce was worth 600 Chinese dollars and three ounces 1,800 Chinese dollars. The profit being almost double, the ruffians in the border area would risk their lives to go to the Lolo region to import opium. When the inspection team stayed at Liang Shan, many Lolo thought that we were opium merchants. This shows how popular the opium trade is between the Han-Chinese and the Lolo.

The slaves are a part of Lolo property and can be 567 traded as commodities at a market price. They are mostly 721 Han-Chinese, newly captured from the Chinese territory. It is a common practice for the Lolo to capture and kill Han-Chinese in the border area, such incidents having occurred quite frequently in the border districts of Lei-po, Ma-pien, P'ing-shan, and O-pien, especially [69] in Lei-po. Many areas visited by the author, such as the southern part of Hsining, Man-chi K'ou on the border of Lei-po and P'ing-shan, Wu-tzu P'o between Huang-lang and Ching-k'ou, and the